



ARIZONA DEPARTMENT OF EMERGENCY AND MILITARY AFFAIRS

Arizona Division of Emergency Management

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Janice K. Brewer
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THE ADJUTANT GENERAL

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Statewide Exercise to Test Arizona's Ability to Respond to Simulated Catastrophic Events *Vigilant Guard to be Largest Statewide Emergency Response Exercise in State History*

PHOENIX—The 2011 Arizona Statewide Vigilant Guard exercise is being called the largest emergency response exercise to simulated catastrophic events in Arizona's history. Rightfully so.

Approximately 250 agencies and 8,000 participants (e.g., planners, players, controllers, evaluators, etc.) are involved in 2011 Statewide Vigilant Guard, an operations-based exercise designed to enhance the disaster preparedness of Arizona's emergency management agencies, local authorities, National Guard forces (from Arizona, California, Colorado, Utah, Nevada, and Minnesota), and U.S. Northern Command. The exercise will run Thursday through Sunday, Nov. 3 to 6, 2011, and involve simulated on-scene responses in several locations throughout Maricopa County.

"This is a great opportunity for our state, local, federal, and tribal agency partners to respond to a simulated catastrophic event of this nature," said Brig. Gen. Jose Salinas, Director of Joint Staff, Arizona National Guard.

The exercise will consist of two phases—a simulated flood and a simulated Improvised Nuclear Device (IND) detonated in the Phoenix Metro Area. The scenario will test plans for simulated mass evacuation, mass fatality, medical response, receiving, staging and delivery of federal resources, continuity of operation/direction of control of state government and public information.

The consequences of an IND would be extensive. The impact on local, state and tribal governments and critical infrastructure would be considerable. The simulated evacuation of citizens of impacted areas along with medical triage will be a component of the overall response plan.

"Arizona responders have extensive real-life experience with wildfires and floods," said Lou Trammell, director of the Arizona Division of Emergency Management, in describing the complexity of the exercise scenario. "So we developed a one-two punch of catastrophic incidents that—despite the unlikelihood—could happen and would offer an opportunity to educate participants, notionally overwhelm state resources and trigger assistance from outside sources."

The simulated exercise is scheduled to have role players responding to pre-planned training venues in the Phoenix metropolitan area and are designed not to affect traffic and local communities.

"This was an enormous undertaking that has taken months of planning and collaboration," said Salinas. "I am extremely appreciative to all those involved."



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MEDIA ACCESS NOTE: Media members will have access to one of the exercise sites with photo, video and interview opportunities on Friday, Nov. 4, by sending an RSVP to Capt. Valentine Castillo at valentine.c.castillo@us.army.mil, by Oct. 31. The time and location will be provided before Nov. 4 after RSVPs have been received.